

Tam-biog: Dennis.

EXERCISES
AT THE
ORDINATION
OF
JAMES S. DENNIS,

Under the appointment of the American Board

AS MISSIONARY TO SYRIA.

HELD IN THE

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, NEWARK, N. J.,

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23d, 1868.

Newark, N. J. :

PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION.
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Meeting of the Presbytery.

At an adjourned meeting of the Presbytery of Newark, held in the First Presbyterian Church lecture room, Wednesday, September 23d, at 3 P. M., JAMES S. DENNIS, of Newark, N. J., having been examined, was accepted as a candidate for ordination as an evangelist, his prospective field of labor being the Syrian Mission, under the auspices of the American Board; and the services attending the ordination, were appointed to be held in the First Presbyterian Church at 7½ o'clock the same evening. In the absence of the Moderator, Rev. ROBERT AIKMAN, of Elizabeth, was invited by the Presbytery to preside in the evening, and offer the ordaining prayer.

A sermon was preached by Rev. J. F. STEARNS, D. D., Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Newark, after which Rev. ROBERT AIKMAN spoke briefly of his regret that occasions like the present did not occur more frequently in the history of the Presbytery, and of his earnest desire that deeper feelings of interest, and higher views of personal responsibility might possess the hearts and consciences of all Christians with regard to the great and important work of Foreign Missions.

He then recited the proceedings of the Presbytery, and proposed the Constitutional questions to the candidate. After which he offered the Ordaining Prayer, being assisted by the Presbytery in the laying on of hands.

A charge was then delivered by Rev. D. W. POOR, D. D., Pastor of High street Presbyterian Church, Newark, followed by an Address of Welcome on behalf of the Syrian Mission, by Rev. H. H. JESSUP, D. D., of Syria.

The services were concluded by singing the hymn commencing, "All hail the power of Jesus name," followed by the doxology, and benediction by the newly ordained evangelist.

Sermon by Rev. J. F. Stearns, D. D.

ISAIAH xlix : 6. “ And he said: It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.”

It is the purpose of God, as made known in the Scriptures, to convert the whole world by human instruments. Of this, the passage before us contains one of the most explicit declarations. It is addressed to the Messiah, of whose expected reign, the prophecy of Isaiah is so full. And being addressed to him in his capacity as servant of God, and Head of the Church, it indicates the agency by means of which the purpose was to be effected. So the apostles Paul and Barnabas seem to have understood it, when, upon the rejection of their message by the Jews at Antioch in Pisidia, they “ waxed bold, and said: It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken unto you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying: I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.” What he had said in prophecy to their Master, they regarded as said like-

wise to his apostles. And by parity of reasoning, what he said to them, we may regard as said with suitable qualifications, to the whole Church, and to every member of it. "I have set *thee* to be a light of the Gentiles that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." (Acts xiii : 49.)

Here, then, we have the Church's mission under her Divine Head. If the world is to be converted at all, *she* is to do it. Using the means of grace already provided, under the favor of Divine Providence, with reliance on the Holy Spirit to give efficacy to the truth, she is to go forth to the conversion of the race just as she has heretofore done (only with vastly increased zeal, self-devotion and burning love) to that of individual men.

No doubt the great Head of the Church might have adopted other and quicker methods. But he did not see fit. This was the one best adapted to call forth Christian activity, to invigorate the piety, test the devotedness, quicken the affections, and develop the capacities of the Church. Had he done the whole work by a miracle, his people might have looked on and admired, but would have been conscious of no responsibility and enjoyed no opportunity to co-operate. Had he done it by angelic agency, the glory of the instrument might have attracted an undue portion of the praise. But he committed it to men, frail and peccable, that the privilege might be ours on the one hand, and God's all the glory on the other. As St. Paul forcibly expresses it, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power might be of God, and not of us."

Yes, the *power* is of God. And this is our answer to the unbeliever when he talks of the inadequacy of the instrument, "You

are attempting," he says, "an impossibility. Why, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, this thing might not be!" But there is no need that the Lord should make windows. The divine forces already in operation, the word and ordinances, the providence and the grace of God, fully employed, are sufficient, without the slightest disturbance of the course of events in the order of nature, to give success to the endeavors of his servants. Too often, in the course of her history has the Church grown impatient or despondent, either abandoning her high hopes raised by prophecy, or sighing for her Lord's personal return that he might at once put the finishing stroke to the work with his own hand. But she must not throw back upon *Him* what he has chosen to entrust to her faithfulness. When he ascended up on high, leading captivity captive, he left the command: "Go *ye* and make disciples of all the nations." And the gifts which he gave, and the powers he engaged in their favor, were, no doubt, sufficient for the completion of the enterprise.

Let us look first at the *means* furnished for the purpose. We may affirm confidently that the divinely appointed means, which are the truth revealed in the Holy Scriptures, the ordinances and institutions of the Church and the privilege of prayer, supply all that could be asked for in the way of means, for the conversion of the world.

The object cannot be promoted by force. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal." Other systems of pretended religion may be propagated by force. Ours never. Could the whole world be subdued by Christian arms, and so made to accept the Christian name and law, it would still be as far as ever, and perhaps

farther, from the true Christian religion. It can not be promoted by authority. The time has passed, we trust, when leaders may do all the thinking for their followers, and ignorance be deemed the mother of devotion. Men must understand for themselves, and believe and decide for themselves, or their faith will not be that of the heart. Nor can it be advanced by tricks of sophistry and concealment. The only way in which such religion can be propagated is by bringing out clearly and fully, and urging, by its own proper claimant, on the judgments and hearts of men, the simple truth in its own native beauty and majesty.

For the prosecution of this object, God has given us the Holy Scriptures, that most wonderful book—a vast repository of religious truth, unveiling to us the hidden depths of our own nature, and the world unseen, revealing God, and standing out before all ages as a perpetual witness of his mind and will. He did not withdraw himself behind the veil of nature, through which, in the infancy of the race, he made his face at times so clearly visible, and his voice so distinctly heard, till he had given to the world, for the advantage of all time, a supernatural revelation. I say a supernatural; and yet most natural. It was given by men speaking and writing in their own language and their own forms of thought; and the very stuff of which it is composed is, for the most part, human experiences. And yet the revelation is divine. It claims to be so. It bears credentials clearly proving it to be so. Its very contents are a conclusive witness that it is so. No uninspired man could have produced such a volume. It brings man and God into the closest relations and makes us hear God's voice, even as did Adam among the trees of the garden. We

work in our great mission in a human way ; but the instrument with which we work is *divine*. There is a divine authority lying behind it, and a divine power going along with it.

This instrument, thus divinely provided, is of no partial or temporary application. It is addressed to man as man. In all its parts the unity of the race is assumed as a fundamental principle. The subjects of its gracious provisions are children of one and the same human father. The wants it is designed to meet are those flowing from one and the same human fall. The salvation which it offers is the restoration of the same divine image, and the privilege of sonship with the same Heavenly Father, and a final home in the same heavenly mansions. And, what is more than all, the Saviour whom it offers, and who is the central figure in all its doctrines, histories, promises, persuasions and invitations, the "all in all" of whatsoever it undertakes to do or teach is the Son of Man, the second Adam, the embodied ideal of what man, as man, ought to be, the one centre of redemption, and the one perfect model for the entire human family. A revelation like this, as may be seen at a glance, is adapted to the wants of man in all times and under every possible variety of human development. It never grows old, as our own experience testifies ; for at no period of the past was it more precious to men's souls than we have found it in ours. A portion of it was given originally among the Jews and shaped especially for them. Yet in those very parts Gentile Christians have found more spiritual food than even the Jews discovered. As, in the course of ages, it has been carried from one nation to another, it has been found to possess the same virtue and produce everywhere substantially the same fruits. It

has been tried in high places and in low, among barbarians and in countries highly civilized and refined, in Africa, in Asia, among the barbarous islands of the ocean, in all the countries of ancient and modern Europe, among the savages of aboriginal America and Australia, and everywhere, with some diversity of degrees has it proved its power to make men "wise unto eternal life." To the consciences and hearts of all classes, it has proved itself to be "quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and body, of the joints and marrow, and a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." To all who have received it, and become subject to its influence, it has proved "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and instruction in righteousness." And who can doubt that having done so much and tried its power successfully in so great a variety of circumstances, it will be found sufficient in every future emergency, and contains within it the seeds of *renovation* for the entire human family?

No doubt a great work needs to be done in unfolding, illustrating and applying truths hitherto partially latent. The Bible is a deep mine which the exertions of the best thinkers have as yet but partially explored. Like the physical universe, the work of the same Master, it requires all the attainments of the most advanced science in every age to bring out and bring into full use its inexhaustible riches. When the good old pastor Robinson said: "I am verily persuaded there is more truth yet to break forth out of God's holy Word," he said that which every generation might repeat, and which is one of the best guarantees for the progress of Christianity. There is going to be a great contest over the

questions—"What *is* the Bible, and what are its claims?" Infidelity in its various forms of Atheism, Naturalism, Pantheism and that which calls itself *rational* christianity, is girding itself up for a desperate effort, and has been now for a long time collecting weapons of attack from every quarter. In the fields of science, philosophy, history and antiquities, battles have but begun to be fought, which will require, on the part of those who should defend the faith, the utmost vigilance, courage, union and preparation. The young men of our day ought to advance far *beyond* the position of their fathers, and grapple vigorously, according to their abilities, with all the questions affecting revealed truth to which the public mind is directed. But we have no fear of the result. It is God's truth and only needs to be understood, both in its own positions and its relations to all knowledge in order to triumph. All the attacks that are made upon it will but serve to display the more its divine strength.

I say, then, we have no need to have a new revelation in order to convert the world. That which we have is sufficient. It is as good now as it was when it spread Christianity all along the shores of Western Asia and Northern Africa, extended its sway far away to the Indus, and made of pagan Europe a united Christendom. And it is just as well adapted to convert the Japanese as it was the English, and the masses of China and India, as it was those of the Roman Empire. And what we say of the Bible we may say also of the Church and her institutions, her sacraments, her worship, her discipline and her ministry. Only these are to be carried *back* (where they have departed,) to their original purity and simplicity, and used with vigor and self-devotion,

accompanied with prayer. We want no new Church and no new ministry. The Christian ministry, as already established, is the ministry for the millennium. The Christian Church, as the Apostles founded it, is the Church for the latter day. Let both fulfill their mission, and while prayer holds heaven's gate open and keeps up a living communication with the Fountain of strength, there need be no discouragement in the widest efforts for the evangelization of mankind.

II. But we are pointed to the obstacles—they are so formidable! How can we ever reach the remote masses? How get access to their minds? How overcome their prejudices? How get the truths of the Gospel within their knowledge and in contact with their hearts? To this I answer, there is a *Providence*, and that Providence is on the side of the Gospel. We may affirm with the same confidence, in the second place, that the *Providence* of God, working according to its *ordinary methods*, is sufficient for the removal of all the obstacles and the supply of all the requisite facilities.

We have witnessed in our day wonderful changes. The world in which we live is, in many respects, very different from that into which we were born. The most widely separated tribes live very near to each other in comparison with what they did fifty years ago. Who would have dreamed then of crossing an entire continent at a continuous speed of twenty or thirty miles in the hour? Who would not have thought the scheme visionary which must depend for its success on the conveyance of intelligence across the Atlantic in less time than would be required for a messenger to ride post haste to the next village? But would such

a scheme appear visionary *now*? And how have this and the like changes been effected? By a series of fortunate accidents, says the Atheist. By the natural course of events, says the man of the world. By God's all-wise, all-controlling Providence, says the Christian Philosopher. There is a divine power working *always* in the affairs of the world. It makes no show. It disturbs no material laws. Looking back over its path you find the series of effect from cause everywhere unbroken. Yet marvellous results come to pass. Events which once seemed not to be thought of take place quietly as a matter of every day occurrence; so that we are able to accomplish by our own natural strength what would once have surpassed the power of all humanity combined.

And what is true in the natural world is true also in the moral. God has not taken his finger off from either, since he put in motion the wheels of nature and of man's natural life. He controls all the forces of society, all the operations of governments, all the intercourse of nations, all the changes of popular feeling and opinion. Those who watch carefully the movements of the world can often see in them unmistakeable evidence of a *purpose*. But whose purpose? Not that of the men who act in and seem to govern those movements. For it is a very *different* one from that which they have had in their minds. It combines for its accomplishment forces over which they have not the slightest control, and is brought about, even where it employs their *actions*, directly against their *intentions*. This was signally illustrated in the case of our own recent war. The most casual observer could hardly fail to discern tokens of it. The result was not in the design of either of the parties, yet successes and defeats were

made equally to contribute to it. Who formed that purpose? Who made the combinations necessary to carry it into effect? Of course it was not a matter of accident—that has no purpose. Of course it could not be ascribed to men. None of them fully comprehended it. We have no recourse, then, but to ascribe it to God. And the same divine intelligence, employing the same divine power, is in operation everywhere, determining all things in the on-goings of the world, according to the counsels of his own wise, Infinite WILL.

Now what we affirm is, that this divine Providence, acting in accordance with a divine purpose, acting *now*, acting *always*, acting not against nature but in nature's own sphere, is adequate to the removal of every obstacle and the supply of every facility for the conversion of the world by *human instrumentality*. We used to speak of the imperviousness of China—a people rigidly excluding themselves from foreign intercourse—a people of fixed customs and fixed ideas, changeless for ages. How could those millions of human souls ever be reached? But what have we seen? A mighty movement, agitating that vast empire to its centre, in the interest of a misconceived and adulterated, yet not without some obscure rudiments of a true Christianity. The little leaven ferments. The mighty multitudes “feel after if haply they may find.” And what again? The pagan rulers of those hundreds of millions, of their own accord, asking admission to the society of Christian nations, and selecting an American citizen to negotiate in their behalf the treaty of intercourse! We used to hear much of the caste system of India; but it is melting away like the dew of the morning. Slavery seemed to us ten years ago so entrenched

among us, that nothing could overthrow it. But it is gone, never to be restored. These are specimens of the providential changes which we see going on all the world over. Thus is the way opening for the free access of the Gospel, and the influence of Christendom made to bear on the most secluded portions of heathendom. Thus have mountains of prejudice been scaled, and strong fortresses of superstition been demolished. Wars, revolutions, the enterprises of the discoverer and the emigrant, all the improvements of science and the arts, every step of advance in civilization, social culture and thought, are made to serve as providential instruments for this end. Commerce is pushing its bold way east, west, north, south, everywhere demanding as its right free intercourse, and carrying with it facilities of which the Christian adventurer may make use. And everywhere is heard not always with philanthropic, and still less with Christian aims, but yet effectively, the prophetic cry, "Go through, go through the gates, prepare ye the way of the people, cast up, cast the highway, gather out the stones, lift up a standard for the people."

I know that what we call the improvements of the age, do not always tell directly on the progress of the Gospel. We shall be told that infidelity is increasing. That may be true. It is not the office of Divine Providence to convert the world by its own agencies. All we can expect of it is to prepare the way, break down the barriers, plough the soil, afford the facilities; and if the Church does not seize the advantage, no doubt the enemy of all good will. But the Providence of God can furnish every needed opportunity. And this it can do to any desirable extent, without transcending in the least degree its most regular and ordinary

methods. Thus is the prophetic voice verified, "Every valley shall be filled and every mountain shall be made low." And thus the word of the Lord, faithfully preached by his servants, "shall have free course and be glorified."

III. But there is one point more not to be overlooked. It may be said, all this does not meet the necessities of the case. The power which makes the Christian does not lie either in the facilities or the means. St. Paul said of himself: "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase." The divine power which gives the increase, belongs neither to the word nor Providence of God, but to *his grace*.

Let me say, then, in the third place, that the established operations of divine grace, the influences of the Holy Spirit, as they now descend and have been descending with greater or less power for two thousand years, without a miracle, without any agency, not in constant operation in a greater or less degree, are sufficient to give such efficiency to the preaching of the Word as to accomplish the object in view.

I need not stay to prove here the reality of the Spirit's influence. It is on this alone that we rely for the conversion of a single soul. It is, no doubt, subject to its own laws. God never acts arbitrarily, though he acts freely. But we cannot trace them. Why it descends more copiously at one place or time than another, we cannot tell. Some powerful effusions which we have witnessed show what it can do, when God wills, without at all changing its character. What are called "revivals of religion," "great awakenings," &c., have been known in the Church since the days of the Apostles. The scene at Pentecost was one of them. The

English missionaries in the Southern Pacific labored sixteen years without a single conversion. "The heavens above them," they say, "seemed as brass, and the earth under them as iron." In the very night of their despondency the voice of prayer was heard from the lips of a native. It was the beginning of a most wonderful change. The flame spread and soon enveloped the islands. And while the ship was on its way, conveying from their noble English patrons, the resolution sooner to "sell their garments from their backs than give up the enterprise," another was on its way carrying back the intelligence that a whole people had abandoned their idols. We look upon such changes as these and exclaim, What has God wrought! In our astonishment we almost feel ourselves in the presence of a miracle. But there is no miracle. All the ordinary causal sequences, physical and moral, are going on just as they are wont to do. No new law of the human mind has been introduced, no old law in the slightest degree disturbed. Nor are such occurrences altogether infrequent. They are to be found in the history of all our Missions—in the Sandwich Islands, in Ceylon, in China, in Africa, as well as in various parts of Europe and America. The truth is, the grace of God, since the mission of the Spirit has obtained a settled home among the forces of nature. It is not of them, yet is in perfect harmony with them. God acts in it as a sovereign, for it is a sphere reserved, so to speak, for his own direct spiritual agency. Yet its benefits are dispensed ordinarily on established conditions. The prayers and efforts of the Church, the faithful preaching and inculcation of the Word, have a vital relation to it. A preparatory work, both in the Church and the world, always precedes its more powerful manifestations.

But when the fullness of the time comes, and the Spirit is poured out like the rain, there is no show, no violence, no mighty physical signs, but only "a still small voice" in men's hearts.

Now what if these occurrences should become more frequent? What if that which is now occasional should become constant? What if the breadth of their operations should be enlarged? What if the power manifested in them should become more intense? How easy would it seem, under the faithful preaching of the Word, with the prayers and efforts of the whole Church, Divine Providence having opened the way, to accomplish the conversion of the world? What we have witnessed in our own country, within a few years, may serve as an illustration. Such results could not be repeated often or continued long, without bringing to God almost the entire population. And all so naturally! As the rain descends, and as the sun shines, so does the Spirit of God come, and the whole face of society is changed! It would not take long for the superstitions of ages to be dissipated, the iron bands of prejudice to be broken, the idols utterly demolished, and the whole earth covered with "the knowledge of the glory of the Lord!"

And why should we not expect such a result? Why should not we pray for it? Why not labor with direct reference to it, hoping and trusting in the "exceeding great and precious promises of God?" If I am not mistaken, there are such promises bestudding the pages of the Old and New Testaments. The present is the dispensation of the Spirit, in which, while Nature goes on in her old course, Divine Providence controls the outer world, and the Holy Spirit of God works by human means in men's hearts. And there

are promises not yet fulfilled, of mighty outpourings of the Spirit in the latter day. It may take a long time for the accomplishment of the object. God's preparatory work has been going on already nearly two thousand years, and He is still overturning, overturning, overturning. But the signs of the times indicate a steady advance. Be sure He has not forgotten any of his promises. The dispensation of the Spirit will not cease till the mission work of the Spirit has been fully accomplished. This fallen world is not to be destroyed till it has been converted. It is to be converted not by a catastrophe in nature, or a miraculous sign from heaven, but by the agency of Christian men, acting in the line of Christian duty, in dependence on the Word, Providence and grace of God.

Why then should not the Church awake at once to her high privilege, awake from her apathy and worldliness, awake also from her too faithless discouragement. Let her put on her strength; let her bring forth her resources; let her take in the whole compass of her great work; let her aim be the completed enterprise; let her run her race steadily and energetically with her eye fixed on the *goal*.

It is with such an aim that we have entered, in these modern times, on the missionary work. "The field is the world." We have compassed it in our plans. We have compassed a large portion of it in our actual explorations. And we mean to compass it by God's help in our beneficent efforts. There are the heathen to be converted. There are the degraded masses in Christian lands to be lifted up. There are the old fallen Christian churches to be resuscitated, or their members disenthralled from superstition and error, and drawn off into purer and more spiritual organizations.

And the Church can do it. She intends to do it. Ay, she *must* do it.

Into this last department of the great work, you my young brother, who are now to be set apart, by the laying on of hands and prayer, to the Christian ministry, are preparing to enter. This is to you, I know, a moment of intensest interest—an interest, need I say, in which your pastor, who, from your boyhood, has regarded you with peculiar tenderness, watching over and assisting to direct, with something of the warm affection of a father for a son, your intellectual and spiritual development, very deeply participates. Fresh in my memory is the time, when, a mere child, you whispered in my ear, timidly, the wish and purpose to become a minister of the Gospel, and equally so that still more solemn hour, when side by side with that honored mother who now gives you up, not without some natural maternal shrinkings, to the work of a missionary in a foreign land, as she then gave you with herself to the unconditional service of Christ, you professed publicly in this house your choice of Him for your portion, and took upon yourself the vows of the everlasting covenant. That wish and purpose, long the subject of your prayers, God permits you now to fulfill. It was He, I doubt not, who disposed you to become a missionary. Not without much thought and deliberation, not without great strength and clearness of conviction, not without ample time taken to test, under a variety of circumstances, the sincerity and wisdom of your choice, have you consecrated your life, with all your powers, to this department of service.

I give you joy, my dear young brother, in the auspicious prospects now opening before you. You have engaged in a work

second to none that ever occupied, or could occupy the powers of a mortal. In the mission to which you are appointed, you will enroll your name with those of some of the noblest and most successful soldiers of the cross, now with the sainted dead—with those of Fiske and Parsons, and Goodell and Bird, and Eli Smith and Whiting, and Hebard—names honored on earth for all time, and honored, I doubt not, in heaven. You will be associated in your work with some of the ablest and best men of the age, in whose counsels you will share, and in whose wise plans it will be a privilege to co-operate. The location of your mission is on ground memorable in history. Its position is such as cannot but give it in the future, a vast influence on the destinies of the world—at the very centre of political and commercial power, in the highway of the nations.

Gird yourself then to your great work with a holy energy. Give yourself wholly to it. Take to yourself the whole armor of God. Place before you for your aim, nothing less than the glory of Christ in the conversion of this lost world to his love. It cannot, will not fail. If not in earth, no doubt in heaven, you will rejoice over its perfect accomplishment. And whether we, who now bid you God speed as we send you forth, shall ever meet you or not again in this world, may we see, in God's great day, your crown of righteousness, and hear the Master's voice bidding you welcome, as a tried and faithful servant, to "the everlasting kingdom and joy of your Redeemer."

Brethren and friends we have all of us in this matter a personal responsibility. Our young brethren must not go forth unattended with our sympathies and prayers, and our faithful pledges of

support and co-operation. This work is not *theirs* only. It is ours as well. We cannot do our part by delegation only. Our Lord expects of us personal service. To each and all is the commission given: "I have set thee to be a light unto the nations." *Thee!* whom? Thee, Christian. Thee, least of his disciples. Thee, ransomed sinner, purchased with his blood! Consider the object—a world lying in wickedness, to be filled with the glory of God! Consider the responsibility. Our Lord will come soon to take account of his servants. Consider the obligation. "Bought with a price!" Look, my friends, at your Bibles, your Sabbath Schools, your pleasant Christian sanctuaries, your family altars and your closets. The wants of millions of our brother-men who have none of these, cry, "come and help us!" Ay, the Master himself, He who has saved us, He with whom we hope to dwell in glory forever, looks from his heavenly throne and reminds us of gratitude: "Freely ye have received, freely give"—give in every way in which his goodness may enable you; give of your money, give of your prayers, give of your children, give your warmest sympathies and most efficient endeavors. O, if there is a people in the world to whom these words come with power, it is we: "FREELY YE HAVE RECEIVED, FREELY GIVE."

Charge by Rev. Daniel M. Poor, D. D.

MY DEAR BROTHER, and I may here add, BELOVED ASSOCIATE AND FRIEND :—The time draws nigh when the delightful fellowship of labor, maintained between us for the last eighteen months, must cease, and we are to part—I remaining at home to carry alone the burden you have been kindly helping me bear—and you, to convey abroad the divine commission which you have been delivering here. However many the occasions for regret at such a separation, with me and my people, there is none who would interpose them to detain you among us in opposition to the call which your soul has heard from the great Master to depart hence and bear witness for Him among those who have not heard His name, or, having heard, sadly misapprehend its gracious import. The cause of Christ and His redemption is too grand to be impeded by personal considerations; and we know that were you to love home and friends and the pleasures of Christian society, more than Christ himself, you would not be worthy of Christ, nor suited to represent Him even among us. The minister who is not ready to be a missionary, should the summons be made to him, is not true to his office, and dishonors his title. When you tell us, therefore,

that you have heard distinctly the missionary call, we recognize its imperativeness, and crowning you with our benedictions and prayers, we say, "Go, and the Lord go with thee, and make thee a blessing to others, even as thou hast been to us."

In discharging the duty of the occasion, which, at your request, has been imposed on me, you need not that I should say much unto you. By your labors among us, you have already given proof, that in the matter of the ministry, you are a workman that need not be ashamed. All that is needed is that you go on as you have begun, preaching the Word in all fidelity and tenderness, and laboring both publicly and privately, in season and out of season, by example and counsel, to impress its unspeakable importance on the minds of men.

Passing by, therefore, the ordinary exhortations pertinent to the general subject of the ministry, let me come directly to those thoughts which are suggested by your future vocation as a *missionary*. This is distinguished from that you have hitherto fulfilled, not so much in substance as in form, being modified by the peculiarities of the field wherein you are to labor. And this field will be a new one—*new* in every respect; not only *new* as to spiritual culture, but *new* also to *you*, as it respects the people you are to labor among, and the instruments you are to labor with. Not as here, will you find things ready made to your hands, and the advantage of entering upon other men's labors. Your business will be the harder and rougher one of laying foundations in a soil that has to be cleared from encumbrances of gigantic superstitions and errors, centuries old. And not only so. The ruins and rubbish of a Christianity that has been strangely perverted and gone to decay now

likewise cover the region where you are to plant churches of a purer faith—even the living temples of an indwelling God. And here you will be obliged to toil long, and toil obscurely, before as yet the very first stones of the edifice can be laid, and the structure begin to rise which shall gladden your eyes as the permanent result and reward of your workmanship. In most instances your problem will be not *how* or *what* you shall preach, but how you shall gather your congregation to preach to, and where you shall assemble the people. Thus you will be brought down to the very rudiments of evangelical labor and into close resemblance to our blessed Lord and the Apostles, at the commencement of their ministry. Like them, you will be obliged to begin by addressing the *individual*, wherever he may be found—putting yourself in personal contact with men, women and children, in the house and by the way and at the market—improving all opportunities to present to them Jesus, and turning all incidents to best account. For work such as this you will require the tactics of the Apostle Paul, whose example in dealing with men for God I would specially commend to your earnest study and imitation. Like him begin by counting all things but loss for Christ's sake—learning, eloquence, reputation, chances for using and displaying high gifts and attainments—let it all go in the simple endeavor to lay hold of men and bring them to repentance and faith. At Athens, you will remember, Paul stood on Mars' Hill, and made a great speech; probably one of "his most splendid efforts." But at Athens Paul's success was small; no church, that we read of, did he found there. At Corinth he repudiated all "wisdom of words," and "in weakness and fear and much trembling," he wrought among the poor and

despised of society by the simplest personal address; and there, in that most depraved of cities, the Lord "gave him much people." Here, I take it, is a lesson for all ministers, but especially for a missionary. If ever a person needs to employ the power of direct personal influence, coming into close, earnest contact with the people, in all meekness and love, it is he. And in doing this work, you will, like Paul, need to cultivate great versatility of character, "becoming all things to all men"; adapting yourself to their ways of life and modes of thought, if so be you might get at them and cause them to feel the warmth and sincerity of your personal interest in their welfare. As far as possible, close the gap which diversity of civilization creates between different nationalities, and partake with them in their carnal things, so that they may the more readily partake of your spiritual things. Show the sympathizing, compassionate heart everywhere. Here will be the hiding of your power. It was one secret of our Lord's mighty influence that "He had compassion on multitudes," and made the humblest and neediest feel its warmth and cheer. In proportion, then, as you show the people that you love them, feel for them, can stoop to their conditions without evincing condescension, desire their salvation and elevation in all good, will be the strength of your hold upon them, and also their readiness to receive the Gospel at your lips. Exhibit neither surprise nor contempt at the alien manners and customs you may encounter. Observe the strictest courtesy, presuming not in the least upon your superiority of culture or upon the powers of your commission. Before attempting to rebuke or correct, aim to understand. Judge things not only from your own point of view, but also from the stand occupied by

the people you are among. Maintaining a wise indifference to non-essentials, abide firmly by the essentials alone, both of morality and religion. Be ready to use all agencies and instrumentalities which God may put in your way for furthering the one great object, without being too scrupulous as to their exact suitableness in all things. Consider how God consents to employ us, and, as He sees us, we are far from perfect. Let us not be more scrupulous than God. We must consent to work with the materials we have, and show our skill in using poor tools to the best advantage. Remember, poor tools in the moral world grow better by good usage.

In dealing with men, wayward, crooked, perverse, of dull moral perceptions, ready to turn the very Gospel you preach and the advantages you bring into means of promoting their own selfish ends, your patience will often be tried to the utmost and your animosities greatly provoked. It was so with Paul; and in such cases, most of all will you need Paul's spirit, which was also the spirit of Christ. Let personal considerations be ever entirely submerged. So far as offences and injuries and insults affect you personally, let it not appear that you have noticed them. The obtrusion of self in any issue taken is fatal to spiritual influence. As soon as it is observed that personal motives are bearing sway in your decisions, that moment you neutralize the power of your position as a missionary who professes to have renounced self for the good of others, and who, on this ground, presses his claim to be heard and heeded. Ever keep yourself, therefore, on the high level of one who can even "take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions for Christ's sake." Carry everywhere

the majestic attitude of one who can say with clear look "I seek not yours but you."

One of the prime conditions for discharging your duties will be *the acquisition of the language* of the people you labor among. This, therefore, must be one of the first things securing attention. But the acquisition of a language for oral uses, can be cloister work only in small part. The power of speech comes through hearing and practice. Hence it will be for your profit to mingle much with the people from the beginning, and courageously to use every particle of knowledge you may get in the effort to acquire more. As it is the policy of the merchant to make every "dollar chase a dollar," so must it be yours to set every word to catch a word. Shrink not through fear of mistakes. It is the bold swimmer that soonest acquires the art. Launch out, therefore, at every opportunity. Count on blundering and learn from it. Now and then we find a missionary who utterly fails, simply through fear of failing. Even in the matter of learning a language, one must be willing "to be counted a fool that he may become wise."

In your first efforts in missionary work there will be much to dishearten. Here is a danger you will have to encounter at the outset. It is then that the contrast between your own ineffectiveness and the magnitude of the work before you will strike you most appallingly, and you will be disposed to feel that you were wasting powers and energies to little purpose. But against all such discouragements, bear in mind that you are neither to measure duty by *the amount* or even by *chances* of success; nor yet to judge of *probabilities* of success by *appearances*. Remember the

parable of the mustard seed ; and while you are busy with small things, obeying the orders of the great Husbandman, be cheered with the thought that results are with Him and He giveth increase to the smallest things, making them great to the praise of His power. The consideration that is to sustain and urge you onward amid all disheartenments is, that you are fulfilling the behests of your Lord and Master, and that your reward will be according to your *fidelity* and not according to your *success*.

Another point to be considered is your association with other *missionaries*. In consequence of this association, you will not be at liberty to act with entire independence. In all co-operative labor it will be necessary to adopt some *general policy* in which all parties shall concur. With this, as already existing, it will be for your comfort and the comfort of your brethren that you cordially comply. But while you endeavor to fall in with existing arrangements, do not on your part attempt to *press your method of working* upon others. Allow the largest liberty consistent with unity of aim. Paul had his way of working and Peter his. One thought he could accomplish the most good by supporting himself and refusing "to lead about a wife or a sister;" while the other accepted support and enjoyed companionship. But neither Apostle thought of making his own policy paramount over that of the other. And so let it be with you. Remember that the aptitudes and gifts of men vary, and that the method most suited for success with one person may utterly neutralize the efforts of another. Let Saul wear his armor and David carry his sling. The point is to kill Goliath and rout the Philistines, and honored will be he who can accomplish that. And if you see that it is some humbler per-

son than yourself who has been called to achieve the victory, let not the evil spirit of the jealous Saul prevent you from joining in the hosannas which the event elicits. The cause is one, and whoever may strike the effective blow, all will, and all should triumph with praises unto Him to whom alone the honor is due.

There is another class of men with whom your relations will be somewhat delicate and at times trying. I mean the native pastors and catechists. As a general thing, your superior culture and abilities will enable you to act as their instructor and guide. But oftentimes, they, by reason of their better knowledge of the language and better acquaintance with the people and circumstances, will have the advantage in judgment and power. It will be your wisdom to yield and defer to them. Such a relative position will test your humility and call for that temper of mind which consents to become as nothing that it may serve all. You will then show yourself best qualified to take the lead when you can understand how courteously to retire and give others place when the occasion demands. Remember, it will be your business to build up self-sustaining congregations and self-reliant pastors. You cannot do this unless you consent to be "among them as one that serveth," and allow them full scope for the exercise of their independence. This may lead at times to some seeming disorder in your system, but disorder is one of the attendants upon liberty and independence. You must rejoice when you see men, if actuated by a right spirit, ready to take upon themselves responsibilities, and to act for themselves, even though they may not agree with you in every particular. The missionary does not go out to become the Lord over God's heritage, even though he may have been instru-

mental in winning that heritage. His real greatness will show itself in endeavoring to rear men to place in God's kingdom, "whose shoe's latchet he may be unworthy to unloose." Court, then, the magnanimity of John whose joy was fulfilled when pointing to his success, or he could say "He must increase but I must decrease."

You will also stand in peculiar relations to the American Board. Here the obligations will be mutual. The Board is organized for the sake of supporting the men who volunteer to execute the commission devolved upon the whole church. It is, therefore, in one sense, the servant of the missionaries, who go out upon their Lord's appointment. But if the missionaries derive support from the church through the Board, it is but proper that they hold themselves responsible to the church, through the Board, for the right use of the funds they receive, and the manner in which they employ their time. Your position will be, therefore, one of modified independence and subordination, which the grace of love and Christian devotion will teach you how to preserve and maintain. No doubt your judgment will sometimes differ from that of those who sometimes undertake to direct you; and you may feel called upon, at times, to express your adverse opinion and to advocate it strenuously; but when, having so done, and then finding yourself overruled, learn patiently to submit and wait for the ultimate divine, providential decision, which shall either vindicate you or convince you. There is no greater mischief to a good cause than the jarring in counsel, made by an obstinate good man. Say your say out boldly and kindly, and, when you are in a minority, yield. This is true Christian heroism.

Your prime obligations, however, are to your great Master. His is the commission you bear ; His is the strength in which you execute it ; His is the glory of your success ; to Him are you mainly responsible ; and from Him will you get your reward. Keep this fact foremost in your heart. It is the one grand consideration, which, absorbing all others, should control, direct and stimulate you throughout your whole work. A missionary loses his character when he forgets this, and with this he loses everything noble belonging to his vocation. Let your consciousness then be ever filled with the abiding thought—" I am the ambassador of Christ to those who have not known His name and have not asked for Him ;" and in this consciousness speak and act ; be ready to do and to die ; committing the whole burden of care about the issue with Him who, unseen, hovers over every field where His servants are toiling, to help them in the conflict and to receive their spirits when the time of departure comes. To His keeping, therefore, we commend you, my dear brother, in the full assurance that He will keep that treasure of our hearts which we thus commit unto Him until the last day. We know not what His decisions may be in reference to you for the future, whether it be a long and useful life, spared through many dangers and perils, to close at last serenely in your native land, like that of the Patriarch Goodale, or a martyr's death in early life, like that of Miriam and Coffing, or a return to this land, broken by disease and excess of work, as is the case with many others ; but whatever it may be, we have such trust in the reality of your connexion with the Master, as to be comforted in the assured hope that it will be well with you and for the cause you have espoused through you. Only watch thou in all things ;

endure afflictions ; do the work of an Evangelist ; make full proof of thy ministry, and the Lord, whom you serve, will stand by you to the end. To Him, therefore, and to the word of His grace do we all commend you—*we*, the Presbytery, under whose care you have been brought into the ministry—this ancient and venerable church, which has been your spiritual home from your infancy, and its pastor—I too, and the people of my charge, on whom your impress will linger long as that of a Timothy, whose youth has so blended with the gravity and earnestness of manhood as to win both tender affection and cordial esteem,—also the whole circle of friends and associates who have closed around you in ever growing regard,—and will add, father, mother, brothers and sister—all, all unite in invoking upon you the selectest blessings of our heavenly Father ; and in praying that He may give you the rich reward of bringing many sons into glory. Dearer to us will be the Syrian mission for your sake, and when we meet in our monthly concert of prayer, it will be with peculiar pleasure that we shall look on the page that bears your name and tells us how the Lord is prospering your work. Accept our pledge of sympathy and support. Be thou faithful unto death, and the Lord shall give thee a crown of life. Amen and farewell.

Address of Welcome on Behalf of the Syrian Mission,

BY REV. H. H. JESSUP, D. D., SYRIA.

MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I esteem it a privilege to be permitted on this occasion, to give you the right hand of fellowship, and, in the name of our Lord and Master, of my missionary brethren, and of the churches and people in Syria, to bid you a cordial welcome to the missionary work.

After a residence of nearly thirteen years in that distant land, I can speak from experience of the work to which you have consecrated your life, and, in view of its darker as well as its brighter features, its trials as well as its joys, looking upon it *just as it is*, and as it will continue to be, I can honestly and heartily congratulate you upon the choice you have made.

The important geographical position of the mission to which you are going, is familiar to you and to all present to-night. But its strategic position, with reference to the great work of evangelizing the world, is still more important. It is in the very centre of the Mohammedan world. The religion of Mohammed extends from Peking in China, to Liberia in Western Africa, and numbers

one hundred and fifty millions of followers, of whom one hundred millions speak the Arabic language. The only sacred book of these millions of Moslems is the Koran, an *Arabic* book; and whatever their vernacular or *spoken* language, whether Turkish, Mandingo, Persian, Tartar, Hindostanee, or Chinese, they can read the Koran only in Arabic. These one hundred and fifty millions of men, spread over one hundred and twenty degrees of longitude, if then, they can read their own sacred book at all, they must read it in the Arabic language, which is the language you are to speak, and preach, and write, and think in, during your life in Syria.

If you write a book in Arabic, it will be ready for a population more than four times as large as the United States. If you train a native preacher, he can go through the whole northern half of the vast continent of Africa, and find the people able to understand him, and read the Bible he bears with him; and then turning eastward, he may traverse Persia, Afghanistan, Belochistan, Tartary, Northern India, and Northern China, and find everywhere men who will revere his Arabic Bible, because it is in the sacred language of the Koran. You will learn on reaching Beirut, that the Arabic Bible translated and printed there, has already been scattered abroad from Liberia on the West, to Peking in the East. You will find a vast and overwhelming work unfolding before you—a work which is to be felt in years to come, not only in the narrow geographical area of Syria, but throughout the region occupied by one-eighth of the human race.

You go to Syria at a time when you are *greatly needed*. The brethren there are overwhelmed with work. Few, alas, are ready to heed the Divine command, “Go and teach all nations;” and

you may rest assured that on your arrival, you will be greeted with a hearty welcome.

I. I bid you welcome in the *first* place to a life of *hard work*. The missionary work is as varied in its character as is Christian work at home, and as far as individuals are concerned, generally far more so.

Our mission ought to be well enough manned to admit of the same wise division of labor which obtains at home, so that while one is pastor, another is teacher, another author, another editor, another missionary secretary, and another city missionary or colporteur. But owing to the numerical weakness of the most of our missions, one man is often compelled to act as pastor, preacher, visitor, editor, teacher, author, singing-master, itinerant colporteur, architect, superintendent of schools, postmaster, and even printer. It is not likely that you will ever be called to serve an apprenticeship in all these varied duties and offices; but you will not be long on Syrian soil before you will find that the missionary's office is no sinecure. In the first place, you will find a formidable barrier between yourself and the people—the Arabic language. That language is to be learned, not by magic, nor by any short method, but by dint of hard work.

The Arabic language is an admirable school of humility and patience. You have been studying for years. In the Academy, the College and Seminary, and in the active duties of pulpit ministration, you have been laying up stores of knowledge, so that in science, the ancient languages, and theological learning, you have probably few peers among the natives of the land to which you are going. But on your arrival your lips will be sealed. With-

out the means of communicating with the people, all your learning will be of little avail. You must become a little child again that you may be wise, and beginning with the alphabet, learn letter by letter, word by word, sentence by sentence, reading, writing, and above all, *hearing and speaking* the language, until you find yourself gradually mastering the difficult gutturals and Oriental idioms, unconsciously perhaps to yourself, but none the less surely.

One element of a child's character is especially needed in learning a foreign tongue, and that is, so to speak, his fearlessness, his utter indifference to making mistakes.. Our own children make constantly the most laughable mistakes in learning the English language; but with childish simplicity, try again, until they master the difficulties of articulation and pronunciation. Do not be afraid of mistakes. Listen carefully to the native pronunciation. The *ear* is of more practical use than the *eye* in learning to speak any foreign tongue. Spend as much of your time as possible with the natives of the country. Walk with them, ride with them, visit them, and improve every opportunity to *make* talk on every occasion.

No young man need fear to enter the missionary work on account of the difficulties of the language. Let any Christian young man, of good education, sound common sense, and ordinary habits of study, enter the missionary work, full of the love of Christ and the love of souls, and find himself in the presence of thousands of immortal beings, who know not Christ, with no barrier between himself and their hearts but a difficult language, and *he will break that barrier down.*

Again, with a life of hard work before you, you should use

every means for the *preservation of bodily health*. As a matter of conscience and Christian duty, do not spend too much time in the confinement of your study. Breathe the free, pure air of Lebanon's heights or the Mediterranean's shores, cultivate flowers, geologize among the fossiliferous rocks, call upon the farmers in their fields, the gardeners by the water courses, and the artisans in their shops. There is no glory in falling a martyr to the Arabic language, and it is poor economy to break down your health prematurely by neglecting the simplest rules of health. Expect to live a long life, and to spend it all on missionary ground. Do not allow a morbid conscientiousness to prevent your taking needed rest and recreation.

II. I bid you welcome to an office and a work which are pre-eminently *Apostolic*. It is well that every missionary, upon setting out in his great life-work, should understand the nature of that work.

The experience of the last half century in missionary work has evolved this principle, that the foreign missionary goes forth to do precisely the work which Paul and Peter and James and John did, in the Apostolic age.

It is the work of preaching the Gospel, leading souls to Christ, organizing the believers into churches, and ordaining native pastors over them. It is necessary to the life and growth and perpetuity of the native churches everywhere, that they have their own pastors and support them.

You do not go to Syria to be a pastor in Beirut or Sidon, or Tripoli or Abeih or Hums. It is very natural that a missionary, after sowing long in tears and gathering an interesting church

to every member of which he holds the relation of a spiritual father, should feel that *he* can act as their pastor better than any one of their own number, and should desire to remain in a relation to them which he has temporarily and perhaps necessarily held; but if he would develop in that church the feeling of self-respect and manly independence, let him rather devote himself to the training of a native pastor, to be installed over them and supported by them.

The Arabs have a proverb, "*Iza kan beddak tiffly insan, isnoodhoo*"—"If you would palsy a man hold him up;" and if you would palsy a native church, feed it and nurse it and brace it up, and very soon, by leaning upon you, it will forget the use of its limbs and become a helpless cripple. There are too many such cripples already on missionary ground, which need to be galvanized into life, by being forced to take up their beds and walk. Do not, therefore, picture to yourself the delights of the pastoral relation; you go forth as an Evangelist. You will journey where Paul journeyed, and you go to do again the very work of planting and founding, and organizing, which he performed.

You will preach and journey and converse with men personally and collectively. You may at some time be called to aid in training native ministers, or in preparing a Christian literature for the millions who speak the Arabic language; but remember, that if you act as a pastor at all, it must be from that sad necessity which arises from the want of a native ministry. In the strategy of missions, the true Christian Evangelist goes forth on a campaign to the enemy's country. He reduces a citadel, a fortress, a town, a district, to allegiance to Christ, but he cannot remain to garrison

the conquered country. The people themselves, brought into loyal obedience, must man the forts and hold the strategic points for Christ, while the Apostolic Evangelist must pass on to points beyond. Paul was not a pastor in Galatia, Ephesus, Phillippi, Rome or Colosse, but he founded churches in these places, ordained pastors over them and then moved on to parts still lying in darkness.

When circumstances required, he inquired into their state and wrote searching epistles to them, and such will often be the experience of the modern missionary. You will have disappointments and trials not unlike those of the Apostle to the Gentiles, and it will often prove a source of comfort to you, to study the experience of that man of God, as delineated in his Epistles, and find how similar are the Galatians and the Cretans and the people of Asia in our day to those of whom the Apostle wrote. And you will perhaps cease to wonder that the Apostle could gather men into churches and afterwards speak of them in terms of such bitter reproof.

III. I bid you welcome to a life of *patient waiting*. When the Syrian farmer goes forth to sow his grain, he is often obliged to use for seed literally the last wheat remaining in store for the support of his wife and children. He goes from his house weeping and he sows in tears, then comes the struggle with want—the patient waiting, until at length the tears are wiped away and the whole house is filled with rejoicing as he returns again, bringing his sheaves with him. You may reap soon, you may not reap at all. But you are bidden to sow the seed, not knowing which will prosper.

But how different your work from that of Parsons and Fisk, Goodell and Bird, who first went forth into that Syrian harvest field as missionary pioneers. Fisk sleeps under the Cypress trees of Beirut, where in later years Eli Smith and Whiting and not a few others, have lain down to await the resurrection morn. Parsons sleeps in an unknown grave down in Egypt. But what a change since his day. Just above the grave of Pliny Fisk now stand the American Press building, with its two steam power presses; the Female Seminary, with its one hundred pupils; the new Evangelical Church edifice with its overflowing congregation, and near by the Protestant College, and Medical Institution; while along the slopes of Lebanon, in northern Galilee, and around the entering in of Hamath, are little churches of living believers in Christ. Your work will be one of faith, but far more a work of sight than was allowed to the earlier laborers in the East. You may plant new seed or water seed already planted, but the increase and growth of fruitage are of the Lord.

IV. I welcome you to a work of *personal discipline*. The Lord has not only a work to do *by* you and *through* you, in Syria, but a work to do *in* you. Hence you will find trials strewn in your path. Fear them not. Shrink not from your encounter with foes within and without. When led to ask why are my hopes disappointed so often, why do the fairly promising blossoms bring so little fruit, why do hopeful cases of seeming conversion relapse into apostasy and open hostility, why is there so little spiritual life, or self-denial, or gratitude among those for whom I have toiled and wept and prayed and denied myself?—let it be a comfort to you to know that your Saviour Jesus brought you to Syria, not

only that He might use you to bring others to heaven, but by the sanctified influence of gracious discipline, He might *fit you* for heaven. Trials will come oftentimes just when you do *not* expect them. The trials of climate and strange customs, of a difficult language, of separation from friends and deprivation of Christian society, will be much less severe than you may anticipate; but new forms of spiritual trial will spring up in your path, and you will need to live near to Christ, and lean upon Him, and commit every interest, every care, every question of duty, every burden to Him, and He will give you relief and the victory.

V. Again, I welcome you to a labor of *love*. The first duty of a missionary is to *prove to the people that he loves them*. If you cannot do this you will not reach their hearts. Identify yourself with them. They are men like ourselves. They can be melted by love when they cannot be broken by argument. They are shrewd and sagacious in reading human character. They can tell in a very brief period whether you really love them and desire their good. You cannot expect them to appreciate your self-denial in leaving home and friends for their sakes. Your books, your dress and your European habits may lead them, perhaps, to think that your physical lot is far easier and higher than that of themselves. But if you show an interest in their welfare, identify yourself with them as a people, show a fondness for their language and their customs, many of which are beautiful and commendable—if you convince them that you have come to live and die among them, and to live only for their good and the glory of Christ, you will win their confidence, and they will listen with interest as you tell the story of the Cross.

Do not fear to go among the lowliest of the people in the most abject abodes. Some fifteen years ago I listened to a missionary charge given by the now sainted Goodell to a young missionary just going to India. In allusion to this very point he said: "When you reach India, my brother, and gaze upon the wretched condition of its crowded people, living in filth and degradation, and the thought comes into your mind, how can I, a civilized man, born and trained in a land of Christian light and refinement, so degrade myself as to associate with such miserable, abject creatures, at whose very presence my refined nature revolts; then remember, I entreat you, the prayer which you offer every day of your life that God would send his pure and sinless Spirit, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, to descend and *dwell* in your vile and sinful heart; not simply to come to you, but to stay and take up his *abode* with you;" and so I would say, remember what the Holy Spirit has done for you, and be always willing to labor for the lowest and most wretched of the fellatahs in the Syrian mountain villages.

VI. In conclusion, let me welcome you to the missionary work, taking Christ as your only model and exemplar. You will be associated with a band of earnest and beloved Christian brethren, some of whom labored in Syria before you were born. You will find in the native churches not a few ripe and experienced Christians who walk with God, and will receive you with a most cordial welcome. You will be led, in that land of Apostles and prophets, to study anew the characters of those holy men of old, who wrought righteousness in that very land where you labor. But take no man or men as your models. Follow Christ. He has

bidden you "go," but He goes with you. Like the Syrian Shepherds, with whom you will often rove over the mountains and plains, He goes before His people. He will go before you. On the sea He will be with you. When your feet first touch the soil of Syria He will be with you. You will find Him as near and as precious in your Syrian closet as in your own loved home.

He will lead you beside still waters. He will search out the green pastures of His love for you, even amid the wilderness of spiritual desolation.

Welcome then to Syria—to the number of our enfeebled mission, whose hearts have already been cheered by the tidings from afar that you are coming to their relief.

Welcome to the fellowship of joy and sorrow, to the discipline of trial and personal sanctification; to the patient watching and waiting for that harvest which has been watered by tears; to the Apostolic work of founding churches in the name and to the glory of Christ; to the hard labor of an earnest worker in the Master's cause; to the winning of the people's love and confidence, and above all, to the humble imitation of Christ our living Head, our only Exemplar, without whom we can do nothing.

May His Spirit dwell in you richly, make you faithful unto death, and give you at last many Syrian jewels in your crown of rejoicing.





